

# POS

**POSSESSIVE.** *adj.* [*possessum*, Lat.] Having possession.  
**POSSESSORY.** *adj.* [*possessive*, Fr. from *possesse*,] Having possession.  
 This he detains from the ivy much against his will; for he should be the true possessor lord thereof. *Howel.*  
**POSSESSOUR.** *n. s.* [*possessor*, Lat. *possesseur*, Fr.] Owner; master; proprietor.  
 Thou profoundest hell  
 Receive thy new possessor. *Milton.*  
 A considerable difference lies between the honour of men for natural and acquired excellencies and divine graces, that those having more of human nature in them, the honour doth more directly redound to the possessor of them. *Stillington.*  
 'Twas the interest of those, who thirsted after the possessions of the clergy, to represent the possessors in as vile colours as they could. *Atterbury's Sermons.*  
**POSSET.** *n. s.* [*posca*, Lat.] Milk curdled with wine or any acid.  
 We'll have a posset at the latter end of a seacoal fire. *Shak.*  
 In came the bridemaids with the posset,  
 The bridegroom eat in spite. *Suckling.*  
 I allowed him medicated broths, posset ale and pearl julep. *Wise's Surgery.*  
 A sparing diet did her health assure;  
 Or sick, a pepper posset was her cure. *Dryden.*  
 The cure of the stone consists in vomiting with posset drink, in which althea roots are boiled. *Floyer on the Humours.*  
 Increase the milk when it is diminished by the too great use of flesh meats, by gruels and posset drink. *Arbutnot.*  
**TO POSSET.** *v. a.* [from the noun.] To turn; to curdle: as milk with acids. Not used.  
 Swift as quicksilver it courses through  
 The natural gates and allies of the body;  
 And, with a sudden vigour, it doth posset  
 And curd, like eager droppings into milk,  
 The thin and wholesome blood. *Shaksp. Hamlet.*  
**POSSIBILITY.** *n. s.* [*possibilitas*, Fr.] The power of being in any manner; the state of being possible.  
 There is no let, but that as often as those books are read, and need to requireth, the file of their differences may expressly be mentioned to bar even all possibility of error. *Hooker.*  
 Brother, speak with possibility,  
 And do not break into these woful extremes. *Shaksp.*  
 Consider him antecedently to his creation, while he yet lay in the barren womb of nothing, and only in the number of possibilities; and consequently could have nothing to recommend him to Christ's affection. *South's Sermons.*  
 A bare possibility, that a thing may be or not be, is no just cause of doubting whether a thing be or not. *Tillotson.*  
 According to the multifariousness of this imitability, so are the possibilities of being. *Norris.*  
 Example not only teaches us our duty, but convinces us of the possibility of our imitation. *Rogers's Sermons.*  
**POSSIBLE.** *adj.* [*possibile*, Fr. *possibilis*, Lat.] Having the power to be or to be done; not contrary to the nature of things.  
 Admit all these impossibilities and great absurdities to be possible and convenient. *Whitgift.*  
 With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. *Mat. xix. 26.*  
 All things are possible to him that believeth. *Mar. ix. 23.*  
 Firm we submit, but possible to fverve. *Milton.*  
 It will scarce seem possible, that God should engrave principles in men's minds in words of uncertain signification. *Locke.*  
 Set a pleasure tempting, and the hand of the Almighty visibly prepared to take vengeance, and tell whether it be possible for people wantonly to offend against the law. *Locke.*  
**POSSIBLY.** *adv.* [from possible.]  
 1. By any power really existing.  
 Within the compass of which laws, we do not only comprehend whatsoever may be easily known to belong to the duty of all men, but even whatsoever may possibly be known to be of that quality. *Hooker, b. i. f. 8.*  
 Can we possibly his love desert?  
 2. Perhaps; without absurdity.  
 Possibly he might be found in the hands of the earl of Essex, but he would be dead first. *Clarendon, b. viii.*  
 Arbitrary power tends to make a man a bad sovereign, who might possibly have been a good one, had he been invested with an authority circumscrib'd by laws. *Addison.*  
**POST.** *n. s.* [*post*, Fr. *equus postis curior*.]  
 1. A hasty messenger; a courier who comes and goes at stated times; commonly a letter carrier.  
 In certain places there be always fresh posts, to carry that farther which is brought unto them by the other. *Abbot.*  
 There I'll rake up, the post unattended  
 Of murtherous leeches. *Shaksp. King Lear.*  
 I fear my Julia would not deign my lines,  
 Receiving them by such a worthless post. *Shaksp.*  
 A cripple in the way out-travels a footman, or a post out of the way. *Benj. Johnson's Discov.*  
 I send you the fair copy of the poem on dulness, which I should not care to hazard by the common post. *Pope.*

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2. Quick course or manner of travelling. This is the sense in which it is taken; but the expression seems elliptical to ride post, is to ride as a post, or to ride in the manner of a post, *courir en poste*; whence *Shaksp.*, to ride in post.  
 I brought my master news of Juliet's death,  
 And then in post he came from Mantua  
 To this same monument. *Shaksp. Romeo and Juliet.*  
 Sent from Media post to Egypt. *Milton.*  
 He who rides post through an unknown country, cannot distinguish the situation of places. *Dryden.*  
**3. [Poste, Fr. from positus, Lat.] Situation; seat.**  
 The waters rise every where upon the surface of the earth; which new post, when they had once seized on, they would never quit. *Burnet's Theory of the Earth.*  
**4. Military station.**  
 See before the gate what stalking ghost  
 Commands the guard, what sentries keep the post. *Dryd.*  
 As I watch'd the gates,  
 Lodg'd on my post, a herald is arriv'd  
 From Cæsar's camp. *Addison's Cato.*  
 Whatever spirit careles of his charge  
 His post neglects, or leaves the fair at large,  
 Shall feel sharp vengeance. *Pope.*  
 Each of the Grecian captains he represents conquering a single Trojan, while Diomed encounters two at once; and when they are engaged, each in his distinct post, he only is drawn fighting in every quarter. *Pope.*  
**5. Place; employment; office.**  
 Every man has his post assigned to him, and in that station he is well, if he can but think himself so. *L'Estrange.*  
 False men are not to be taken into confidence, nor fearful men into a post that requires resolution. *L'Estrange.*  
 Without letters a man can never be qualified for any considerable post in the camp; for courage and corporal force, unless joined with conduct, the usual effects of contemplation, is no more fit to command than a tempest. *Collier.*  
 While you, my lord, the rural shades admire,  
 And from Britannia's publick posts retire,  
 Me into foreign realms my fate conveys. *Addison.*  
 Certain laws, by suff'ers thought unjust,  
 Deny'd all posts of profit or of trust. *Pope.*  
 Many thousands there are, who determine the justice or madness of national administrations, whom neither God nor men ever qualified for such a post of judgment. *Watts.*  
**6. [Postis, Lat.] A piece of timber set erect.**  
 The blood they shall strike on the two side posts and upper post of the house. *Ex. xii. 7.*  
 Fir-trees, cyresses and cedars being, by a kind of natural rigour, inflexible downwards, are thereby fitted for posts or pillars. *Watson's Architecture.*  
 Post is equivocal; it is a piece of timber, or a swift messenger.  
**TO POST.** *v. n.* [*poster*, Fr. from the noun.] To travel with speed.  
 I posted day and night to meet you. *Shaksp.*  
 Will you presently take horse with him,  
 And with all speed post with him towards the North? *Shak.*  
 Post speedily to my lord, your husband,  
 Shew him this letter. *Shaksp. King Lear.*  
 Most wicked speed, to post  
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets. *Shaksp.*  
 Then this, then that man's aid, they crave, implore;  
 Post here for help, seek there their followers. *Daniel.*  
 The Turkish messenger presently took horse, which was there in readiness for him, and posted towards Constantinople with as much speed as he could. *Kneller.*  
 Themistocles made Xerxes post apace out of Greece, by giving out that the Grecians had a purpose to break his bridge of ships athwart the Hellespont. *Bacon's Essays.*  
 Wert thou of the golden-winged host,  
 Who having clad thyself in human weed,  
 To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post. *Milton.*  
 Thousands at his bidding speed,  
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest. *Milton.*  
 With songs and dance we celebrate the day;  
 At other times we reign by night alone,  
 And posting through the skies pursue the moon. *Dryden.*  
 No wonder that pastoralists are fallen into disesteem; I see the reader already uneasy at this part of Virgil, counting the pages, and posting to the Æneis. *Walsh.*  
 This only object of my real care,  
 In some few posting fatal hours is hurried  
 From wealth, from pow'r, from love and from the world. *Prior.*  
**TO POST.** *v. a.*  
 1. To fix opprobriously on posts.  
 Many gentlemen, for their integrity in their votes, were, by posting their names, exposed to the popular calumny and fury. *King Charles.*  
 On pain of being posted to your sorrow,  
 Fail not, at four, to meet me. *Graville.*  
 2. To place;

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2. [*Postum*, Fr.] To place; to station; to fix.  
 The conscious priest, who was suborn'd before,  
 Stood ready posted at the postern door. *Dryden.*  
 He that proceeds upon other principles in his enquiry into any sciences, puts himself on that side, and posts himself in a party, which he will not quit till he be beaten out. *Locke.*  
 When a man is posted in the station of a minister, he is sure, beside the natural fatigue of it, to incur the envy of some, and the displeasure of others. *Addison's Freeholder.*  
**3. To register methodically; to transcribe from one book into another.** A term common among merchants.  
 You have not posted your books these ten years; how should a man of business keep his affairs even at this rate? *Arbutnot.*  
**4. To delay.** Obsolete.  
 I have not stop't mine ears to their demands,  
 Nor posted off their suits with flow delays;  
 Then why should they love Edward more than me. *Shaksp. Henry VI.*  
**POSTAGE.** *n. s.* [from *post*.] Money paid for conveyance of a letter.  
 Fifty pounds for the postage of a letter! to send by the church, is the dearest road in Christendom. *Dryden.*  
**POSTBOY.** *n. s.* [*post* and *boy*.] Courier; boy that rides post.  
 This genius came thither in the shape of a postboy, and cried out, that Mons was relieved. *Tatler.*  
**TO POSTDATE.** *v. a.* [*post*, after, Lat. and *date*.] To date later than the real time.  
**POSTDILUVIAN.** *adj.* [*post* and *diluvium*, Lat.] Posterior to the flood.  
 Take a view of the postdiluvian state of this our globe, how it hath stood for this last four thousand years. *Woodw.*  
**POSTDILUVIAN.** *n. s.* [*post* and *diluvium*, Lat.] One that lived since the flood.  
 The antediluvians lived a thousand years; and as for the age of the postdiluvians for some centuries, the annals of Phenicia, Egypt and China agree with the tenor of the sacred story. *Grew's Cosmol. b. iv.*  
**POSTER.** *n. s.* [from *post*.] A courier; one that travels hastily.  
 Weid fitters hand in hand,  
 Posters of the sea and land,  
 Thus do go about. *Shaksp. Macbeth.*  
**POSTERIOR.** *adj.* [*posterior*, Lat. *posterior*, Fr.]  
 1. Happening after; placed after; following.  
 Where the anterior body giveth way, as fast as the posterior cometh on, it maketh no noise, be the motion never so great. *Bacon.*  
 No care was taken to have this matter remedied by the explanatory articles, posterior to the report. *Addison.*  
 Hesiod was posterior to Homer. *Broome.*  
 This orderly disposition of things includes the ideas of prior, posterior and simultaneous. *Watts's Logick.*  
 2. Backward.  
 And now had fame's posterior trumpet blown,  
 And all the nations summon'd. *Dunciad, b. iv.*  
**POSTERIOR.** *n. s.* [*posterior*, Lat.] The hinder parts.  
 To raise one hundred and ten thousand pounds, is as vain as that of Rabelais, to squeeze out wind from the posteriors of a dead ass. *Swift.*  
**POSTERIORITY.** *n. s.* [*posteriorité*, Fr. from *posterior*.] The state of being after; opposite to priority.  
 Although the condition of sex and posteriority of creation might extenuate the error of a woman, yet it was unexcusable in the man. *Brown's Vulgar Errors.*  
 There must be a posteriority in time of every compounded body, to these more simple bodies out of which it is constituted. *Hale's Origin of Mankind.*  
**POSTERITY.** *n. s.* [*posterité*, Fr. *posteritas*, Lat.] Succeeding generations; descendants; opposed to ancestors.  
 It was said,  
 It should not stand in thy posterity;  
 But that myself should be the father  
 Of many kings. *Shaksp. Macbeth.*  
 Since arms avail not now that Henry's dead!  
 Posterity await for wretched years. *Shaksp. Henry VI.*  
 Posterity inform'd by thee might know. *Milton.*  
 Their names shall be transmitted to posterity, and spoken of through all future ages. *Smollett's Sermons.*  
 To th' unhappy, that unjustly bleed,  
 Heaven gives posterity to avenge the deed. *Pope.*  
**POSTERN.** *n. s.* [*poterne*, Fr. *posterna*, Dutch; *janna postica*, Lat.] A small gate; a little door.  
 E're dawning light  
 Discover'd had the world to heaven wide,  
 He by a privy postern took his flight,  
 That of no envious eyes he mote be spy'd. *Fa. Queen.*  
 Go on, good Eglamour,  
 Out at the postern by the abbey wall. *Shaksp. Henry VI.*  
 By broken byways did I inward pass,  
 And in that window made a postern wide. *Fairfax.*  
 These illud into the bale court through a privy postern,  
 And sharply visited the assassins with halberds. *Hayward.*

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Great Britain hath had by his majesty a strong addition; the postern, by which we were so often entered and surprised, is now made up. *Raleigh's Essays.*  
 The conscious priest, who was suborn'd before,  
 Stood ready posted at the postern door. *Dryden.*  
 If the nerves, which are the conduits to convey them from without to the audience in the brain, be so disordered, as not to perform their functions, they have no postern to be admitted by, no other ways to bring themselves into view. *Locke.*  
 A private postern opens to my gardens  
 Through which the beauteous captive might remove. *Rowe.*  
**POSTEXISTENCE.** *n. s.* [*post* and *existence*.] Future existence.  
 As Simonides has exposed the vicious part of women from the doctrine of pre-existence, some of the ancient philosophers have satyrized the vicious part of the human species from a notion of the foul's postexistence. *Addison's Spect.*  
**POSTHACKNEY.** *n. s.* [*post* and *hackney*.] Hired posthorses.  
 Eripping the French ambassador with the king's coach attending him, made them balk the beaten road and teach posthackneys to leap hedges. *Wotton.*  
**POSTHASTE.** *n. s.* [*post* and *haste*.] Haste like that of a courier.  
 This is  
 The source of this our watch, and the chief head  
 Of this posthaste and romage in the land. *Shaksp.*  
 The duke  
 Requires your haste, posthaste appearance,  
 Ev'n on the instant. *Shaksp. Othello.*  
 This man tells us, that the world waxes old, though not in posthaste. *Hakewill on Providence.*  
**POSTHORSE.** *n. s.* [*post* and *horse*.] A horse stationed for the use of couriers.  
 He lay under a tree, while his servants were getting fresh posthorses for him. *Sidney, b. ii.*  
 He cannot live, I hope; and must not die,  
 Till George be pack'd with posthorse up to heav'n. *Shaksp.*  
 Xaycus was forthwith beset on every side and taken prisoner, and by posthorses conveyed with all speed to Constantinople. *Kneller's History of the Turks.*  
**POSTHOUSE.** *n. s.* [*post* and *house*.] Post office; house where letters are taken and dispatched.  
 An officer at the posthouse in London places every letter he takes in, in the box belonging to the proper road. *Watts.*  
**POSTHUMOUS.** *adj.* [*posthumus*, Lat. *posthume*, Fr.] Done, had, or published after one's death.  
 In our present miserable and divided condition, how just soever a man's pretensions may be to a great or blameless reputation, he must, with regard to his posthumous character, content himself with such a consideration as induced the famous Sir Francis Bacon, after having bequeathed his soul to God, and his body to the earth, to leave his fame to foreign nations. *Addison's Freeholder, N° 35.*  
**POSTICK.** *adj.* [*posticus*, Lat.] Backward.  
 The postick and backward position of the feminine parts in quadrupeds can hardly admit the substitution of masculine generation. *Brown's Vulgar Errors.*  
**POSTILL.** *n. s.* [*postille*, Fr. *postilla*, Lat.] Gloss; marginal notes.  
 To POSTILL. *v. a.* [from the noun.] To gloss; to illustrate with marginal notes.  
 I have seen a book of account of Empson's; that had the king's hand almost to every leaf by way of signing, and was in some places postilled in the margin with the king's hand. *Bacon's Henry VII.*  
**POSTILLER.** *n. s.* [from *postill*.] One who glosses or illustrates with marginal notes.  
 It hath been observed by many holy writers, commonly delivered by postillers and commentators. *Brown.*  
 Hence you phantastick postillers in song,  
 My text defeats your art, ties nature's tongue. *Cleveland.*  
**POSTILLION.** *n. s.* [*postillon*, French.]  
 1. One who guides the first pair of a set of six horses in a coach.  
 A young bachelor of arts came to town recommended to a chaplain's place; but none being vacant, modestly accepted of that of a postillon. *Tatler, N° 52.*  
 2. One who guides a post chaise.  
**POSTLIMINIOUS.** *adj.* [*postliminium*, Lat.] Done or contrived subsequently.  
 The reason why men are so short and weak in governing, is, because most things fall out to them accidentally, and come not into any compliance with their pre-conceiv'd ends, but are forced to comply subsequently, and to strike in with things as they fall out, by postliminious after-applications of them to their purposes. *South's Sermons.*  
**POSTMASTER.** *n. s.* [*post* and *master*.] One who has charge of publick conveyance of letters.  
 I came yonder at Eaton to marry Mrs. Anne Page; and 'tis a postmaster's boy. *Shaksp. Merry Wives of Windsor.*  
 Without this letter, as he believes that happy revolution had never been effected, he prays to be made postmaster general. *Spectator, N° 629.*

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